

## **MINUTES**

### **TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**3 October 2011**

#### **I. ROLL CALL**

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:05 PM on Monday, 3 October 2011. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Co-chair, Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Ms. Peggy Pickall, Mr. Robert Amdur and Mr. Ron B. Mitchell. Mr. Steven K. Hack and Ms. Alice Marie Gravely were not present. Representing the County were Mr. Martin Sokolich and Ms. Florence Ball.

#### **II. CURRENT BUSINESS**

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF 12 SEPTEMBER 2011 TCHPC MEETING – The minutes of the last meeting were read and a correction was noted by Mrs. Marsha Kacher. There being no further corrections, a motion was made to approve the minutes as corrected, was seconded and unanimously carried.
- B. LANDMARKS LIST SURVEY WORK – Mr. Ward Bucher asked if anyone had anything new regarding this topic. Other than to reiterate that the survey was temporarily discontinued until crops were harvested and since Mr. Steven Hack has not yet directed when the Commissioners should begin driving up the lanes to get a closer look at properties, there was nothing new to discuss.
- C. MILLER'S HOUSE IN WYE MILLS (T-70) – Mr. Ron Mitchell reported that Historic Easton is still waiting for the contract to be negotiated. He said he spoke with Elizabeth Beckley (Preservation Maryland) and told her unless the contract is negotiated by Friday, 7 October, Historic Easton will not continue with the purchase of the property. If the contract is ready by Friday, he will meet with MHT on 13 October regarding the grant. Mr. Mitchell said he should have an update by the next TCHPC meeting on 7 November.
- D. SUCCESS OF THE AFTERNOON SOCIAL AT BEVERLY– Mrs. Marsha Kacher reported that the event was really nice and that between 20 and 25 people turned out for the event. She commented that the house was beautiful, and everyone enjoyed the tour. Ms. Alice Marie Gravely had provided lovely light fare and beverages which were beautifully presented.

Ms. Peggy Pickall said she felt that the County Councilmen should have been invited, and regrets the oversight. Mr. Ron Mitchell felt the event was a lost opportunity because there was no presentation about what TCHPC does and how an HDO could benefit the owner of an historic property. Mr. Ward Bucher acknowledged that it would be nice to invite the County Council, and further suggested inviting Rick Towle, Director of the

County Department of Parks and Recreation. He added that brochures and other printed material should be made available at these events.

Mrs. Marsha Kacher said one of the attendees from Llandaff (T-231) spoke to her about an old windmill on her property that exists with the original fabric, but is in need of restoration. She suggested that the woman make arrangements to get on the upcoming TCHPC agenda.

Mr. Ron Mitchell inquired whether a questionnaire had ever been sent by TCHPC to find out what might motivate people to want an HDO. He said it would not cost much to prepare one and send it out to a sample group of people. Mr. Martin Sokolich interjected that most people are interested in tax credits. Mr. Mitchell felt if the questionnaires provide enough positive support on that issue, it might encourage the County Council to grant some form of tax credit to owners of HDO properties. He asked how large the current mailing list is. Mr. Sokolich replied that the list was culled down to approximately 200, but 500 would be possible. He added that the questionnaire might be modeled on one that was sent out to people living in the Village Centers, and that the response from that questionnaire was fairly good. Mr. Ward Bucher called for a motion:

*MOTION – Ms. Peggy Pickall moved to draft a survey letter to ask property owners what might motivate them to want to place their properties under the protection of HDOs. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ron Mitchell and was unanimously carried.*

Mr. Ron Mitchell volunteered to answer questions about such a survey, and to provide the questions for the survey letter. He will email a draft to the Commissioners to comment on at the next meeting.

- E. SEPTEMBER SITE VISIT – Mr. Ward Bucher said the site visit was at Otwell (T-164), but since Mr. Steven Hack is not in attendance, this topic will be reviewed at the November meeting.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. OCTOBER SITE VISIT – Mr. Ward Bucher said Mr. Steven Hack has not yet provided specifics, but should be verifying the arrangements by email.

### **IV. OPEN FLOOR**

- A. 925 PORT STREET (T-347) – Mr. Ron Mitchell announced that Historic Easton is getting involved with this property.
- B. “THE HILL” IN HISTORIC EASTON – Mr. Ron Mitchell said there are many interesting things going on in Historic Easton. Asbury Church launched a research study of “The Hill,” which is believed to be the oldest African-American neighborhood in the United States (*even older than Tremé in New Orleans*). The neighborhood is located on Hanson Street and Dover Street to South Street, spanning two blocks past Aurora Street.

Archaeological digs are to be done, and ten graduate students from Morgan State University will be doing the research. If the research proves that the area is the oldest African-American neighborhood in our country, Historic Easton will apply for a special historic district named "The Hill," and then apply for National Historic Landmark status. Mr. Mitchell said the neighborhood was inhabited during the time Frederick Douglass came to Easton and gathered his people on the corner of Hanson and South Streets. He said, "There was no church at that time; Frederick Douglass's *people* were the church."

- C. ACTIVE BINDERS FOR TCHPC – Mr. Martin Sokolich distributed copies of the TCHPC Active Binders to those Commissioners who do not already have one. Ms. Peggy Pickall asked if it is time to assemble the annual CLG report. Mr. Sokolich said he will contact Cory Kegerise to see what is currently wanted and what the deadline is.
- D. SHORE LIFE – Ms. Peggy Pickall suggested putting together a column in Shore Life magazine describing historic fabric or structures, and telling about TCHPC. She felt it might raise awareness. Mr. Ron Mitchell agreed it is a good idea, and that the people in St. Michaels who are involved with the publication are friends of his. He offered to contact them and see if they will meet with Ms. Pickall and Mr. Ward Bucher to discuss the possibilities.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 7 November 2011, at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One of the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:55 pm.

4 Oct 2011